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TEXT OF TELEGRAM 89BEIJIN015536

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0165
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMCONSUL CHENGDU POUCH)

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SUBJECT: TFCH01: SCENARIO FOR A WAY OUT

REF: GUANGZHOU 3092

1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: RUMORS IN BEIJING AND REPORTS IN HONG KONG'S MING BAO HAVE SET OUT A SCENARIO THAT COULD OFFER PARTY, GOVERNMENT, AND MILITARY LEADERS A WAY

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OUT OF THEIR PRESENT PREDICAMENT. ACCORDING TO THIS SCENARIO, THE 27TH ARMY, UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF YANG SHANGKUN, WAS THE PERPETRATOR OF ALL THE VIOLENT INCIDENTS DURING THE NIGHT OF JUNE 3/4. LI PENG AND YANG SHANGKUN MADE THE DECISION TO ORDER THE TROOPS INTO BEIJING AIDED BY THE ASSESSMENT OF BEIJING PARTY SECRETARY LI XIMING. DENG XIAOPING WAS OUT OF TOWN WHEN THE DECISION WAS TAKEN. THERE MAY OF COURSE BE MUCH TRUTH IN THE SCENARIO, BUT IT HAS THE RING OF SOMETHING CONSTRUCTED TO PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR AN EXPLANATION OF FUTURE ACTIONS. THE SCENARIO COULD HAVE BEEN VERY USEFUL AS A WAY OUT WHEN THE SITUATION WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF POLITICAL MANEUVERING. THE AMOUNT OF MILITARY FORCE BEING USED IN BEIJING PROBABLY MEANS THAT IT IS TOO LATE FOR THIS SORT OF CONVENTIONAL CHINESE SCAPEGOAT SOLUTION. END SUMMARY.

PREPARING A WAY OUT?

3. A NUMBER OF RUMORS AROUND BEIJING SUPPLEMENTED BY HONG KONG NEWSPAPER REPORTS ORIGINATING FROM BEIJING, ESPECIALLY THOSE APPEARING IN HONG KONG'S "MING BAO," SUGGEST THAT SOME ELEMENTS IN THE LEADERSHIP ARE
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PREPARING A RATIONALE FOR EXTRICATING THE PARTY, GOVERNMENT, AND PLA FROM THEIR IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION FOLLOWING THE WORLD-PUBLICIZED MASSACRE OF JUNE 3 AND 4 IN BEIJING. WHETHER THOSE WHO MAY BE SETTING FORTH THIS RATIONALE HAVE SUFFICIENT BACKING WITHIN THE MILITARY, A CRUCIAL FACTOR, IN ORDER TO MAKE USE OF IT AS A BASIS FOR ACTION IS UNCLEAR. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THESE RUMORS AND REPORTS ARE ONLY A FORM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE.

THE SCENARIO

4. THE EVENTS OF JUNE 3 AND 4 ARE TO BE BLAMED ON LI PENG AND YANG SHANGKUN. BEIJING PARTY SECRETARY AND POLITBURO MEMBER LI XIMING, AND POSSIBLY POLITBURO STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER QIAO SHI, WILL ALSO BE IMPLICATED. DENG XIAOPING WILL NOT BE PORTRAYED AS A PARTICIPANT. THE ATROCITIES IN BEIJING ON JUNE 3 AND JUNE 4 ARE TO BE BLAMED ON ONE ARMY, THE 27TH, WHICH IS HEADED BY YANG SHANGKUN'S NEPHEW. THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE JUNE 3 USE OF MILITARY FORCE WILL ALSO BE BLAMED ON LI PENG, LI XIMING, AND YANG SHANGKUN.

RUMORS AND REPORTS

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5. RUMORS THAT THE 27TH ARMY HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXCESSIVE VIOLENCE IN BEIJING BEGAN TO SURFACE ON JUNE 4 AND WAS A COMMONLY HELD BELIEF AMONG MANY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. THE SAME STUDENTS WERE ALSO AWARE THAT THE ARMY WAS HEADED BY A RELATIVE OF YANG SHANGKUN.

6. OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS, THERE HAS BEEN A FLURRY

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SUBJECT: TFCH01: SCENARIO FOR A WAY OUT

OF REPORTS AND RUMORS THAT OTHER PLA FORCES WERE
GOING TO MOVE AGAINST THE 27TH ARMY BECAUSE OF ITS
ROLE IN THE JUNE 3/4 ATROCITIES. THESE REPORTS HAVE
LED SOME JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA COMMENTATORS TO TALK
OF A POSSIBLE "CIVIL WAR."

HONG KONG MEDIA REPORTS

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7. HONG KONG MEDIA REPORTS HAVE PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED THIS INTERPRETATION OF EVENTS WITH "MING BAO" PLAYING A CENTRAL ROLE. "MING BAO'S" TREATMENT OF THE ABOVE SCENARIO COULD BE SIGNIFICANT. REPTEL REPORTS ON A CONVERSATION A GUANGZHOU CONGENOFF HAD WITH MID LEVEL PARTY PROPAGANDA CADRE IN GUANGZHOU. THE CADRE OBSERVED THAT PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN GUANGZHOU WERE RELYING ON THE NEWS OUT OF HONG KONG. HE SAID THAT "THE CITY RELIES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON HONG KONG FOR ITS INFORMATION, ESPECIALLY MING BAO." THE CADRE ADDED THAT "MING BAO IS REGARDED AS MORE RELIABLE THAN WENHUI OR DAGONG BAO BECAUSE THEIR COMMUNIST PARTY AFFILIATION PREJUDICES THEM." IT IS POSSIBLE THAT "MING BAO" HAS A SIMILAR, BUT PERHAPS LESSER INFLUENCE ON CADRE IN BEIJING. THE INCREASING USE OF FAX IN CHINA MAKES IT EASIER TO FORWARD HONG KONG NEWS TO BEIJING THAN BEFORE.

THE REPORTS

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8. FBIS CARRIES A REMARKABLE SERIES OF REPORTS FROM THE JUNE 5 EDITION OF MING BAO. ALL OF THEM SUPPORT THE SCENARIO DESCRIBED EARLIER. THE FOLLWING ARE SOME OF THE TITLES WITH QUOTES FROM THE ARTICLES:

A) - "LI PENG, YANG SHANGKUN HATCHED THE PLOT, THE 27TH ARMY DID THE SLAUGHTER."

- "YESTERDAY'S BLOODY MASSACRE WAS PERSONALLY PLOTTED BY YANG SHANGKUN AND LI PENG. THOSE TWO ALSO ORDERED THE FIRING ON THE PEOPLE."

- "THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, LI PENG AND YANG SHANGKUN CALLED A MEETING TO HEAR REPORTS FROM THE COMMANDERS OF MARTIAL LAW TROOPS (BEIJING MUNICIPAL CPC COMMITTEE SECRETARY LI XIMING ALSO ATTENDED THE MEETING). AFTER HEARING THE REPORTS THEY DECIDED TO CLEAR THE SQUARE. SINCE OTHER TROOPS WOULD NOT TAKE THE LEAD THE ORDER WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE 27TH ARMY, WHICH IS UNDER YANG'S DIRECT CONTROL. THE ARMY IS THE STRATEGIC RESERVE FORCE AND ONE OF THE BEST ARMIES IN THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION."

B) "NIE RONGZHEN SCOLDS YANG SHANGKUN AS 'TRAITOR TO THE ARMY'"

- "THE BLOODY SUPPRESSION IN THE SMALL HOURS OF

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YESTERDAY MORNING ALSO ROUSED SOME MARSHALS AND ARMY GENERALS TO GREAT INDIGNATION. MARSHAL NIE RONGZHEN WANTED TO SEE DENG XIAOPING BUT THE LATTER WAS NOT IN BEIJING. HE THEN SENT A MESSAGE TO THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION, CALLING YANG SHANGKUN A 'TRAITOR TO THE ARMY.'

- "GENERALS ZHANG AIPING AND CHEN ZAIDAO ALSO WENT TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE MARTIAL LAW TROOPS ASKING THEM WHY THEY HAD KILLED SO MANY PEOPLE. THE

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COMMANDERS OF THE MARTIAL LAW TROOPS WERE NOT IN THE
HEADQUARTERS AT THAT TIME AND BOTH ZHANG AND CHEN
ANGRILY LEFT."

- "MOREOVER, SOME ARMY OFFICIALS IN THE NATIONAL
DEFENSE UNIVERISTY PUT UP A BIG-CHARACTER POSTER,
WHICH READ: "WE WILL MAKE THE LI-YANG CLIQUE PAY
THEIR BLOOD DEBT AND AVENGE THE RESIDENTS OF BEIJING."

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C) "LI PENG APPEARED IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE TO DIRECT THE SANGUINARY ACTION"

- "AT 1500 LOCAL TIME YESTERDAY, LI PENG GOT INTO A CAR NEAR THE WEST GATE OF THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE AND TOURED AROUND TIANANMEN SQUARE. HE GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND TALKED WITH THE TROOPS STATIONED IN THE SQUARE, PRAISING THEM BECAUSE 'THEY HAD RESOLUTELY CARRIED OUT THE MARTIAL LAW ORDER AND CRUSHED THE COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY RIOT.'"

- "BASED ON THIS ACCOUNT, IT IS SPECULATED THAT THE COMMAND HEADQUARTERS FOR THE SANGUINARY SUPPRESSION IS LOCATED IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE."

- "AMONG THOSE WHO ACCOMPANIED LI PENG YESTERDAY WERE BEIJING MUNICIPAL CPC COMMITTEE SECRETARY LI XIMING AND SEVERAL HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS OF THE ARMY UNIT ENFORCING THE MARTIAL ORDER."

D) "LI PENG HAS MADE A CRUEL PLAN TO ARREST 20,000 PEOPLE IN 1 OR 2 DAYS"

- "AS DISCLOSED BY AN INFORMED SOURCE, LI PENG
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HAS MADE A CRUEL PLAN TO ARREST IN 1 OR 2 DAYS, 20,000 PEOPLE WHO OPPOSE HIS RULE. THESE PEOPLE INCLUDE STUDENTS, CIVILIANS, AND INTELLECTUALS IN PRESS AND CULTURAL CIRCLES. ACCORDING TO THE PLAN, LI PENG WILL SEND THESE PEOPLE TO HEILONGJIANG, QINGHAI, AND XINJIANG, SO AS NOT TO HEAR THEIR VOICES ANYMORE."

TOKYO SHIMBUN ON DENG

9. JAPANESE NEWS AGENCY TOKYO SHIMBUN ISSUED A JUNE 3 RELEASE ENTITLED "DENG SAID OUT OF BEIJING; CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM DELAYED." THE TEXT READS AS FOLLOWS:

- "RELIABLE CHINESE SOURCES DISCLOSED ON 2 JUNE THAT CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN DENG XIAOPING, WHO IS A CENTRAL FIGURE OF THE CONFUSED SITUATION IN CHINA, LEFT BEIJING FOR A LOCAL CITY. THEREFORE, IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE PLANNED 4TH PLENARY SESSION OF THE 13TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL LIKELY BE CONSIDERABLY DELAYED.

- "THE SAME SOURCES DID NOT DISCLOSE MR. DENG'S DESTINATION BUT SAID THAT HE LEFT BEIJING 'ONLY RECENTLY.'"

- "REGARDING A RUMOR ABOUT MR. DENG'S EXACERBATING HEALTH CONDITION, THE SOURCES AFFIRMED, SAYING: "MR. DENG DID INDEED GO TO A HOSPITAL, BUT HE IS NOT

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SERIOUSLY ILL." THE TRIP TO A LOCAL CITY IS NOT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT BUT FOR 'RESHAPING STRATEGIES,' THE SOURCES EXPLAINED.

- "IN CONNECTION WITH THE HOLDING OF THE PLENARY SESSION, WHICH WAS EXPECTED TO DECIDE GENERAL SECRETARY ZHAO ZIYANG'S DISMISSAL, THE SAME SOURCES NOTE THAT AN ATTEMPTED PERSUASIVE MANEUVER BY THE

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HARD-LINERS, INCLUDING PREMIER LI PENG, WAS DOOMED TO COMPLETE FAILURE. CITING MR. DENG'S TOUR TO A LOCAL CITY, THE SOURCES SAID: 'FOR THE TIME BEING, THE PLENARY SESSION WILL NOT BE HELD. IF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE, THE PLENARY SESSION MAY BE HELD AFTER A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS STANDING COMMITTEE, SLATED TO BE HELD ON 20 JUNE.'

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COMMENT

10. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE TOKYO SHIMBUN RELEASE AND THE SECOND KING BAO ARTICLE LISTED ABOVE HAVE DENG XIAOPING OUT OF TOWN WHEN THE ORDER TO ENTER BEIJING WAS ISSUED. IN ADDITION, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL REPORTS THAT DENG HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY ILL OR EVEN DYING, SUGGESTING HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE DECISIONS THAT LED TO THE ATROCITIES OF JUNE 3/4. IT IS THIS POINT THAT SUGGESTS THAT THIS SCENARIO IS BEING USED TO RESOLVE THE LEADERSHIP PROBLEM. DENG IS BEING PROTECTED.

11. IN ADDITION, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN STARTING THE PROCESS BY HIS SPEECH THAT LED TO THE APRIL 26 PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL, DENG CAN PLEAD THAT HE WAS MISLED BY LI PENG AND LI XIMING IN THEIR ASSESSMENT THAT THE SITUATION EXISTING IN BEIJING FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF HU YAOBANG CONSTITUTED "TURMOIL." THUS THE TWO LI'S AND YANG CAN BE BLAMED FOR THE JUNE 3/4 MASSACRE AS WELL AS FOR THE INITIAL DETERMINATION OF "TURMOIL" WHICH SPARKED OFF THE
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APRIL 27 RALLY AND TOOK THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS INTO A NEW PHASE.

12. SUCH A SCENARIO COULD HAVE BEEN VERY USEFUL WHEN THE SITUATION WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF POLITICAL MANEUVERING. UNFORTUNATELY, THE AMOUNT OF MILITARY FORCE NOW BEING USED IN BEIJING IS PROBABLY TOO GREAT FOR SUCH A SCENARIO TO PROVIDE A SOLUTION. LILLEY

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